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GORDON GOES FOREIGN

Lots of people travel to the big station at the end of the line. Engines from the Other Railway sometimes pull their trains. These engines stay the night and go home next day.

Gordon was talking one day to one of these.

"When I was young and green," he said, "I remember going to London. Do you know the place? The Station's called Kings Cross."

"Kings Cross!" snorted the engine,

"London's Euston. Everybody knows that!"

"Rubbish!" said Duck, "London's Paddington. I know. I worked there."

They argued till they went to sleep. They argued when they woke up. They were still arguing when the other engine went away.

"Stupid thing," said Gordon crossly, "I've no patience."

"Stupid yourself," said Duck, "London's Paddington, PADDINGTON, do you hear?"

"Stop arguing," James broke in, "you make me tired. You're both agreed about something anyway."

"What's that?"

"London's not Euston," laughed James. "Now shut up!"

Gordon rolled away still grumbling. "I'm sure its Kings Cross. I'll go and prove it."

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But that was easier said than done.

London lay beyond the Big Station at the other end of the Line. Gordon had to stop there. Another engine then took his train.

"If I didn't stop," he thought, "I could go to London."

One day he ran right through the station. Another time he tried to start before the Fireman could uncouple the coaches. He tried all sorts of tricks; but it was no good. His Driver checked him every time.

"Oh dear!" he thought sadly, "I'll never get there."

One day he pulled the Express to the station as usual. His Fireman uncoupled the coaches, and he ran on to his siding to wait till it was time to go home.

The coaches waited and waited at the platform; but their engine didn't come.

A porter ran across and spoke to Gordon's Driver. "The Inspector's on the platform. He wants to see you."

The Driver came back in a few minutes looking excited.

"Hullo!" said the Fireman. "What's happened?"

"The engine for the express turned over when it was coming out of the Yard. Nothing else can come in or out. They want us to take the train to London. I said we would, if the Fat Controller agreed. They telephoned, and he said we could do it. How's that?"

"Fine," said the Fireman, "we'll show them what the Fat Controllers engines can do."

"Come on!" said Gordon, "lets go." He rolled quickly over the crossings and backed on to the train.

It was only a few minutes before the Guard blew his whistle; but Gordon thought it was ages!

"COME ON! COME ON!" he puffed to the coaches. "Comeoncomeoncomeon!"

"We're going to Town, we're going to Town," sang the coaches slowly at first, then faster and faster.

Gordon found that London was a long way away. "Never mind," he said, "I like a good long run to stretch my wheels."

But all the same he was glad when London came in sight.

The Fat Controller came into his office next morning. He looked at the letters on his desk. One had a London post-mark.

"I wonder how Gordon's getting on," he said.

The Station-Master knocked and came in. He looked excited.

"Excuse me Sir, have you seen the news?"

"Not yet. Why?"

"Just look at this Sir."

The Fat Controller took the Newspaper.

"Good gracious me!" he said, "there's Gordon. Headlines too! 'FAMOUS ENGINE AT LONDON STATION. POLICE CALLED TO CONTROL CROWDS.'"

The Fat Controller read on, absorbed.

Gordon returned next day. The Fat Controller spoke to his Driver and Fireman. "I see you had a good welcome in London."

"We certainly did Sir!" We signed autographs till our arms ached, and Gordon had his photograph taken from so many directions at once that he didn't know which way to look!"

"Good!" smiled the Fat Controller, "I expect he enjoyed himself. Didn't you Gordon?"

"No Sir, I didn't."

"Why ever not?"

"London's all wrong," answered Gordon sadly, "they've changed it. It isn't Kings Cross anymore. Its St. Pancras."